



**emerson
theatre
company**

Emerson Theatre
Company
130 Beacon Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

William L. Sharp, *Department Chairman*

A. D. Sensenbach, *Director of Graduate Studies*

Al Corona, *Acting*
Herb Propper, *Acting*
Naomi Thornton, *Acting*
Shirley Nemetz-Ress, *Acting*
Vincent Murphy, *Acting*
Steve Wangh, *Acting*

Steve Weinstein, *Movement*

Michael Anania, *Scenic Design*
Mary Thomasine Harkins, *Costume Design*
Catherine Szari, *Costume Shop Supervisor*

Bob Martin, *Technical Director*

Michael Bush, *Publicity*

Tobie S. Stein, *Box Office-House Manager*
Jean Lenville, *Box Office-House Manager*

Andrea Sragg, *Secretary to the Department*

I'd like to thank both of you for tonight's *Two Minds*. This performance is dedicated to you. Please enjoy.
This video file, on the other hand, (which I help us to have our video released)

The After Show Manager

How long have you attended *Two Minds*?

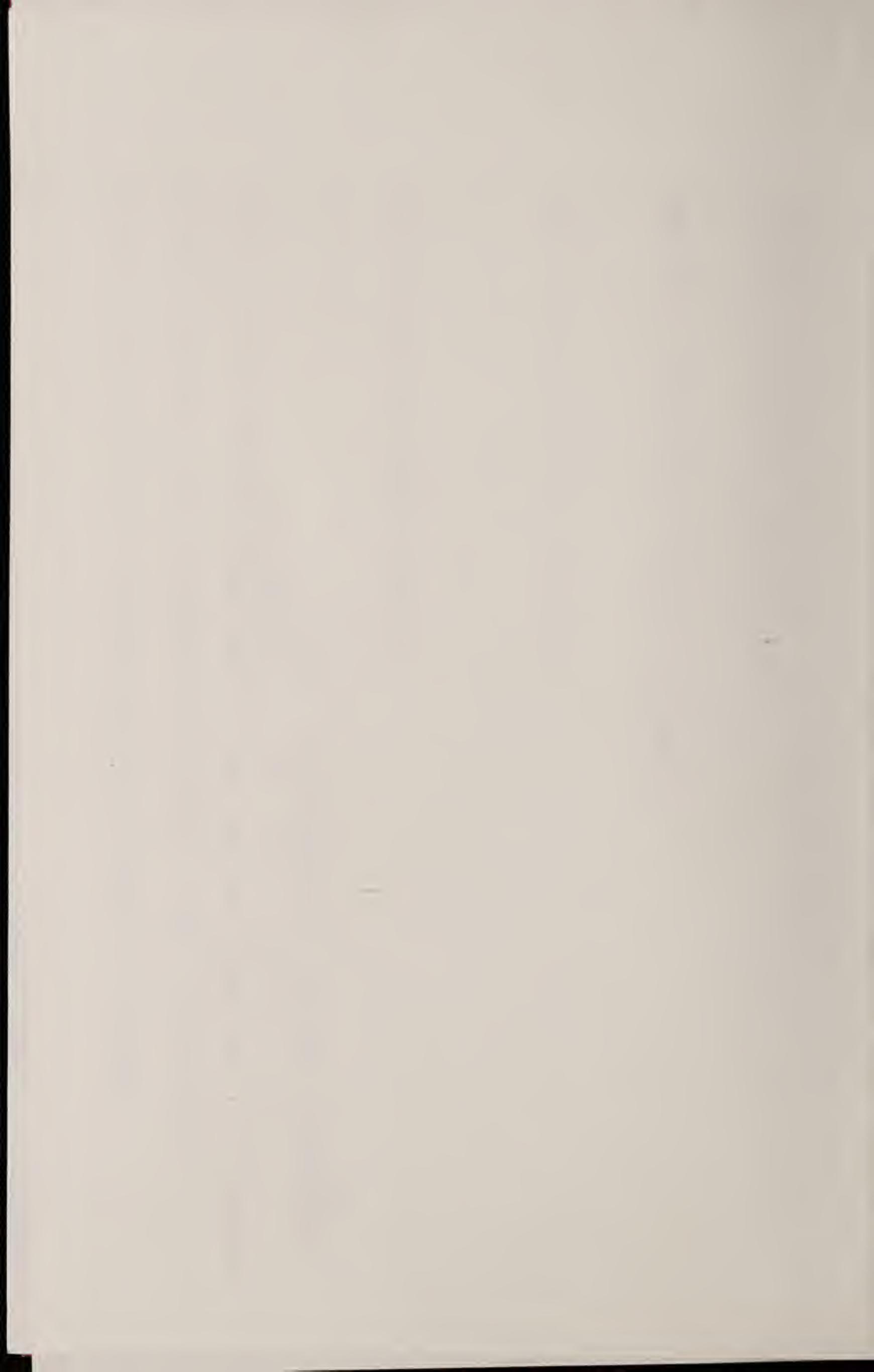
What is the name of your organization?

How did you learn about tonight's performance?

Have you attended with others before?

Do you feel the tradition of the *Two Minds* is well publicized?

What types of shows would you like to see presented here?



The Importance of Being Earnest

A Play in Three Acts
by
Oscar Wilde

March 30 thru April 9

Directed by
A. D. Senenbach

Scenery by
Michael Anania

Costumes by
Mary Thomasine Harkins

Lighting by
Bob Martin

Technical Director
Bob Martin

Production Stage Manager
Kevin J. Larkin

Stage Managers

Peter B. Carzasty

Hans O.W. Moland

The Characters
(in the order of their appearance)

Lane, manservant to Mr. Moncrieff	Stephen DeFrancesco
Mr. Algernon Moncrieff.....	Andrew A. Palmer
Mr. John Worthing, J.P.....	Charles Hall
Lady Augusta Bracknell.....	Cornelia Stryker
The Hon. Miss Gwendolen Fairfax	Lisa Faith Katze
Miss Laetitia Prism, governess to Miss Cardew...	Armanda Famiglietti
Miss Cecily Cardew, Mr. Worthing's ward	Carol A. Graham
The Rev. Canon Fredrick Chasuble, D.D.....	Ralph Borrelli
Merriman, butler at the Manor House.....	John L. Gilson
Footman at the Manor House	Kevin Larkin

ACT I

The drawing-room in Algernon's flat on Half-Moon Street, London, England, at about five o'clock on a Friday afternoon in the summer of 1895.

INTERMISSION

ACT II

The next afternoon in the garden of The Manor House, Woolton, Hertfordshire.

INTERMISSION

ACT III

Immediately following

About tonight's play. . .

It was St. Valentine's Day, February 14th; the year was 1895. On that particular night London was in the grip of a blizzard, but that did not keep the audience from crowding into St. James' Theatre. Curiosity and expectation ran high about the new play which was to have its first performance. For London this was a special "opening night" because the playwright was Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde, that brilliant and outrageous Irishman, the delight of literary and artistic circles in England, America and on the Continent. His play was *The Importance of Being Earnest*, subtitled *A Trivial Comedy for Serious People* (or was it a serious play for trivial people?). In any case, as things turned out, it was this play which primarily was to become the basis for Wilde's popularity and enduring fame.

In uncharacteristic fashion, Wilde had had little to say publicly about his new work. Some weeks earlier, when asked by a journalist what sort of play it was to be and whether it would be a success, Wilde quipped that, "The play is success; the only question is whether the first night's audience will be one." He was right about the play, of course, but the audience was also a success, and enormously so. The snowstorm howled outside the theatre, but inside the delighted audience drowned out the storm with its own gales of laughter. Wilde was at his best; he was by turns urbanely witty, satirically devastating and typically paradoxical. Even such august critics as William Archer and the young H.G. Wells were enthusiastic. Apparently there was only one dissenter in the crowd, George Bernard Shaw, not yet a playwright himself. In his review Shaw complained that the piece was "old fashioned," typical of comedies of the Seventies, while this was the Ninties. He noted that, while it had amused him, it had failed to "touch" him. In fact, to him it seemed sufficiently "inhuman" to be the brain-child of W.S. Gilbert, whose operetta libretti had won delighted audiences for the past twenty years without feeling obliged to be soberly "true-to-life" and modernly "realistic."

Wilde had written the play in three weeks during the previous autumn, while on holiday with his wife and sons, at Worthing, a seaside resort in Sussex. His motives were purely mercenary, he admitted. A play, "by a butterfly for butterflies," he'd called it, and to a friend he wrote that it was, "...exquisitely trivial, a delicate bubble of fancy, and it has its philosophy." Later he stated its philosophy: "We should treat all the trivial things of life seriously, and all the serious things of life with sincere and studied triviality." He also spoke of it as being a "high comedy." Could he have known that today it is usually referred to as "a farce," Wilde would doubtless have retorted vigorously.

The play's plot is, of course, ludicrous, as in farce, but its humor is intellectual, rather than physical, and its language is superbly polished, rather than crude. The characters are neither simplistic nor grotesque, as would be the case if this were a farce; they are simply liberated, if rather eccentric, non-conformists. Most importantly, the standards and values reflected in the action and dialogue are precise inversions of what it is *customary* at least to espouse in social situations. Wilde's systematic "topsy-turvydom" at first shocks and then delights the audience; ultimately it provokes thoughtful examination of cliche thinking and behaving in the "real" world as we still are experiencing it eighty-three years later. These are both the method and the goal of high comedy, and they link Wilde to John Gay, William Congreve, Shaw, Maugham and Coward, all of whom, without either sentimentality or emotional appeals, have made us laugh at what in our "hearts" we recognize to be the truth about human beings and their social worlds.

Production Staff

Set Designer	Michael Anania
Costume Designer	Mary Thomasine Harkins
Lighting Designer.....	Bob Martin
Technical Director.....	Bob Martin
Production Stage Manager	Kevin Larkin
Stage Managers.....	Peter Carzasty, Hans Moland
Assistant to Stage Designer	Ann Howell
Assistant to Costume Designer	Chad Shipley
Assistant to Lighting Designer	Laura L. Cowell
Master Electrician	Peter Zageski
Prop Master.....	Emily Breeden, Stephen Gambino
Sound	Brett Nolte, Rolf Solstad
Assistant to Technical Director.....	Susan DeCausemaker
Master Carpenter	Simon Volpini
Assistant to Master Carpenter.....	Luce Dionne
Assistant to Prop Master	Mark Overton
Costumiere	Catherine Szari
Draper	Kay Haskell
Milliner	Judi Holmes
Textile Artist	Chad Shipley
Make-up.....	Kay Haskell, Bobbi Brown
Accessories Master	Joanna Bodenweber

Costume Construction

Patricia Barker, Suzy Donahue, Ina Buckner, Andrew Palmer, Karen DePolito, Jean Lenville, Mary Carey, John Hollick, Janet Whitman, Carol Graham, Marilyn Margolis-Knapp

Set Construction Crew

Emily Breeden, Carol Charnou, Ann Howell, Tama Natkin, Brett Nolte, Rolf Solstad, Peter Zageski, Melissa Becker, Michael Kondrat, Arlene Mantek, Laura Cowell, Stephen Gambino, Mark Overton, William Smith, Charles Bellardinelli

Work Study Assistants

Jane Bouman, Susan DeCausemaker, Luce Dionne, Madeleine Dubroff, Ray Ganslaves, Mike Kondrat, Mark Overton, Matt Shannon

Light Run Crew

Kathy Papa, Carole Charnow
and the students of TA103

Diction Coach

Stephen DeFrancesco

Special Thanks to:

Kathleen Dahill, Emerson College Music Department, Mrs. June Hamblin Mitchell, Miss Marcia Reiber, Beth Schneider, and Tufts Arena Theater
Mr. and Mrs. James Peckham

Emerson Theatre Company 1977 - 1978 Season

A Streetcar Named Desire – Tennessee Williams
October 12 - 16, 18 - 22

Caligula – Albert Camus
November 9 - 13, 16 - 20

The Importance of Being Earnest – Oscar Wilde
March 8 - 12, 15 - 19

Mad Dog Blue's – Sam Shepard
April 26 - 30, May 3 - 7

LOFT PRODUCTIONS (69 Brimmer Street)

Facing Death – Johan August Strindberg
October 27, 28, 29

Production to be announced – December 8, 9, 10

Production to be announced – March 6, 7, 8

Production to be announced – May 11, 12, 13

Please do not eat or drink in this theatre
The taking of pictures is prohibited.
Smoking is not permitted in the Theatre



emerson college

130 beacon street

boston